M-393
Combined Christmas Group
Wednesday December 26, 1962
Played on January 17, 1963

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The last meeting of the year. How do we look at it? Aside from the usual resolutions in ordinary life which of course we make and we always set out with the idea that the next year may be better or, at least, that we have profitted by this year. How did we profit by this year regarding work? What do you remember? What do you remember about your attempts? How often were you reminded during this particular year about work? And, if so, when? Under what conditions? And what did you do? How strong were you and how weak were you? When you were reminded, did you like it or did you resent it? How often did you wish fo r it?Or rather, when you thought of work, that you were grateful. Or that you thought that perhaps you should have known already about work much earlier and you are sorry about the years that you have already past without knowing anything about it and now you try to hurry up and you beopme impatient because your mind is always ahead of you, and you realize the necessity that something must be done but you only realize it with your mind; and it is translated into a wish and th wish is quite right to have because unless you have that kind of wish, naturally, you will not do anything. It is not just a matter of enjoying a little bit of ideas in your head and then say, "How nice." And usually you would say, "How nice it is for someone else.

I think we have to come to a conclusion already that there is something for us. And altho we are a mixed group and Wednesday may contain a few people who are rather new, I do not think that

they would come unless they have already felt that there is something else involved. In the Tuesday group, of course, we have gone thru a few other things and perhaps have had more experience and as such, of course, on that basis, we know a little bit what it is all about. And also, we have a certain seriousness, a certain wish to work. But, even if you take it as a whole, totally, that is, all of us trying to look at work with the best of intentions and the seriousness with which we look at things usually in life that we consider serious and that we want to remain as honest as we can regarding the necessity of such work and that we really quite willingly would submit to certain things that are required regarding that, even then, we know that our patience runs out and we would like to jump over many ~~kkk~~ obstacles and that we say, "Oh, we already know it." And we want to get there, somewhere, because on the one hand we think that we can; on the other hand, we feel that time is getting a little short. And it is not only when we get older that we feel this. And dependant entirely how we are struck every once in a while by the necessity that work is really required. And that is based on something that we know of ourselbes that really, if we are honest, how little we do, how little we really can think, how little we can actually feel and how terrible we are at times. That kind of honesty I think we know. The limitations we also know. And it is, of course, unjustified because regardless of age, the older the worse, probably.

But we have to realize that we have lived already for so many years in an unconscious state. We have done probably very well in many different directions and we have built up friendships and things of that kind and we also are emotionally

involved. And sometimes we say, "We love our wn work, our profession and all the rest of it." Of course, it is quite right. We have accomplished certain things in ordinary life and maybe we make a living or maybe a little bit more or maybe a little less but, at least, we manage to sit up and take notice. At the same time, all these years that we have spent in that direction with this kind of an education and the things that effected us and have given us certain things which we knnx now cherish and it is really difficult to get rid of them. And it is not neccessary to get rid of them entirely. But we could be free from then xxxxx if actually understand work so that with that kind of a freedom we could continue our lives the way it is without having to give up anything. All we have to give up is our affection for it, our real desire and dependance and also our idea that we need it. I think this is much more important: that we consider that what we how have as something quite necessary for our life. Of course, I would say, "It is not so." But xx that would ne theory. You will find out gradually as you get along in work, as you try, as you see year after year go by. And I do not mean it will be an easy job. And when I say 'year after year' I really mean that. It is not a question of months and months. It is year after year because you have no realiztion at all of h w much bound you are. That is, what these years of unconsciousnxxxx living have done to you and what they have made you, what you are, good and bad, whatever it may be; nevertheless, unconscious, automatic, mechanical, half-xxx. All these things have added up to what you now call: Here I am, educated man. Here I stand. You remember Faust? I do not want

to quote it in German; it is a little too long. But it ends up:

Here I am; ppor fool I am. I am just as wise as I was before. This is the conclusion we come to at the end of the year, at the end of a year of work. If we compare it with a year ago, we probably do not remember. If we compare it with what ought to be possible for us, we feel a little ashamed.

And I say we are too impatient because we believe we could do much more. And very ofetn we say, "I shoould have done better." It is probably the most idiotice statement that one can make. It is based on an illusion that I am different from what I am; that I assume that simply by having a thought and even a wish for applying it, that I can immediately apply it; and therefore I say, "I should". And the reality is, if I look at it quite well, is that I do not know my own machinery. I do not know myself. When I still say that I should be able to do better and the facts are against that, and the fact, you might say, stare me in the face, that I know that I have not done better ~~xxx~~ and that there must be a reason why I don't because my wish has been there. And then I get a little upset because the time seems to go so fast already, even if one is a little young. One wants to accomplish it. I said once: What is the matter of accomplishing something because work will continue all your life. As lon as you live on Earth you will constantly be effected by all the laws of Earth. You will never get rid of it unless something in you is equal to all the laws so that then, according to the laws of density, you can be lifted away from Earht and float.

We do not know what we are. We do not know how heavy we are. We do not know how much we are bound. We do not know how bad an instrument we have. We do not know at all whenever we

see it.

I said the other day: it is as if our instrument is a [illegible] which is just a couple of degrees off. It is not exact. When things are staright, they show just a little curve. When they show a small angle, it is a little larger angle. When it is a large angle, it is a small one. When it is green, it is a little bit off towards the yellow; things of that kind. I am not sure that even that what I seem not only that it is not correct, but I do not have the correction. It would not be so bad if the instrument was always wrong just exactly the same amount. Then I could make the adjustment. I would say that then it does not matter. This ruler is six foot and a half and I know and I can allow for the half a foot and do as if it is six foot. But I do not know in how far I am wrong. I do not know how many degrees I am off. And sometimes I say it ought to be just the opposite. In many cases it is not the opposite. Sometimes it is exactly like looking at a parallax, two stars close together. And they are as if in the same line and still, one is beyond the other and there is an angle between the two lines when I look at them and I do not know how far they are apart because, you see, that what I see is not necessarily the distance between two points. If one is just a little but behind the other, it may be thousands and thousands of miles away. Still, from my view point, it looks as if it is in the same place. Much of what we consider our own psychological ideas, that what we feel we are, is subject to that kind of a law of parallax. We do not know and there is not way of finding out.

I say, as if we could send our body, our functions, to some kind of a laboratory of standardization and find out

actually how much it is off. Very much the same as a balance or the weights for a balance are measured against a certain standard weight of platinum and the we know exactly what it is to have a kilo or a pound or a measurement. We do not even know where to send it, let alone the fact that nothing of the kind exists. So, we are confronted with two things: one is the instrument which we have and the other is the standard. We have no guide. We have really nothing. We have a very small somthing in us which we can say is indelible and which, even at that time when we do consdier it, does not show. So, you see, whichever way we turn we have everything against us and practically nothing in our favor. And then we expect to be conscious in a short while. It cannot be done. We must realize this because if we do not realize it and still have an assumption that we should be different and we should be able to do more than we are doing, I think we make very foolish statements.

At the same time, of course, the question of hope, the question of wanting, the question of actually trying to do what we can in the circumstances inwhich we live and which ever way we have been brought up, if that kind of an acceptcance, if we could take that as it is, that is something new that we can do any time. And therefore I say, "Work is not impossible." The progress of work is slow but work in itself can be dones at any one time for anyone who has just a little bit of a wish and then at that moment changes that little wish into the actuality of being at that moment, real being, so that in reality he could say, "I am", and in actuality, actaully be I and actually be his Being. This is what we have to work for. We have to try to find that particular ground, that way of, as I say, a measurement, that kind of a standard, that standard that we, at the

present time, assume to be whatever it is as far as we can now see what the truth is for us. It is not a standard that is as yet absolute because we are not as yet able to see anything absolute. We can see in what direction the absolute is and we can go towards it and gradually, in going towards a certain absoluteness, we can probably go step by step and get closer to it and then become more and more absolute or perhaps it is better to say, that I become more and more free.

So, it is the lossening of certain things that, ay the present time, we understand as bindage and that what now keeps us and that what is a little bit off; this kind of realiztion that the little offness could be extremely useful. I assume now that everything is off a little bit and I try to correct it in the direction I think it ought to be right. This is the whole point of undoing habits. I do not know what is better from the natnd point of His Endlessness. I only know that as far as habits are concerned, I am entirely wound up and bound by the conditions of Earth or my bringing up. For that reason, I try to introduce something a little different from the habits in oredr as I hope to reach something that is perhaps a little bit clearer or a little bit purer, but, it is not at all certain that I hit it the right way. And, for the sake of argument, for the sake of haveing useful information to work with, it does not matter if I reach the truth immediately. I reach something that enables me, because of its change, to help me to remind me to wake up. If that is what can be accomplished by just the introduction of a little bit of something which is xx a little different which then, for me, could become a law and it is that kind of Legominism which gradually will give me the truth. Bxt maybe for that I have to have many kind of Legominisms so that afterwards

out of the totality of the little changes that I make, I can distill enough information so that then I can set up a certain standard which for me becomes the standard of my life.

I do not want to reach too far. I will reach as far as the sun. I will reach in order to get to the planetary level and, for the time being, let's be satisfied with that. Do not let's think about what will happen when we are in the Milky Way or even if we were God Himself ot Christ. We are just little bits of human beings with a certain desire of wanting to make out of our lives whatever can be made out of it to the best of our ability. And with that we want to work and with that we will work. We will work next year. We will work very much like we have worked this year even if, you might say, the accomplishments and the results have not been what we sometimes may have wished. But, at least, there has been a certain sincerity.

And instead of looking at the day like we do when we unroll a film as if the day has become one and we look at a month as if the month could become one, at the present time, we look at the year as if it is one and we see from the beginning of this year until the end of this year and we are faced with that now. It is like an octave and we are now striking out for a new Do. We are at Si and now we look and find out, in rod to understand this years octave, we have to understand the previous octaves as represented by a year. Once I drank to the possibility of seeing, whenever one drinks Armagnac, the possibility of the totality of ones life. Only then, when I understand that I am what I am because I was what I was, that I have grown and the reason why I am now is because I have grown the way I have grown, what I have eaten, what I

dictated and what I have been exposed to; all the various friends and everything that belongs to my life, my property, the way I have been breathing, the air, the atmosphere, all the kind of things that have been fed into me, including the possibility of hoping for something of more value. All of that represents me at the present time. And, instead of saying, "Here I am at the end of this year", I say, "Here I am at the end of all my years." And now, this is the basis. At the end of this year, we look back. We have to look back because we have to understand the years as they have been. We can no longer balme anything for which we were not to blame. We have to accept it. We could say. "I wish it had been different." But, for all our unconscious efforts, unconscious work, work where we did not have any conscience, everything that has been so-called leaned onto us, for all that we are not responsible at all.

If we are truly in that sense machines, then all we can do is to accept the machine with all its tendancies and withall its so-called big wishes or litttw wishes and then the acceptance of that means I am free. I hope you understand that. Since I have no responsibility.it is very easy to become free. It is only because I assume the responsibility that I am what I am now and that I was responsible for the way I grew. Then, because of that, I am tied to it and I cannot let it go because I feel for that responsibility that it is part of me. If, on the other hand - and this is the real meaning of impartiality, if I can be impartial regarding myself, then I will be free. It is only my feeling and a thought, a mental process, that keeps me tied up to myself as I am. If I truly could be impartial and accept myself as I am, everything that I am, then, with that not-responsibility, I am entitled to take the responsibility for that what

I now accept. And the willingness to accept it means that I have digested this year, last year and the years before so that at the present time I am willing to say, "Here I am. I am now willing to work with whatever I understand of this instrument which I now find at my disposal and for which I now will take full responsibility." In the saem way as my freedom depends on my impartiality, the responsibility depends on the total acceptance of that what I am. Because when I accept myself, then I accept the responsibility to use that what is there for whatever purpose I now see where it should have been used for and it never was. But then, when I say, "I should have, " there is an I which says, "I will." So, the translation of it, the acceptance of that what we are as human beings into an I of taking the responsibility is the transmittance, the transposition, the conversion of the old year into the new one.

It is at that point where things actually become new. But it never will be new unless Iknow the old. And we are still talking about that what we are and the acceptance of that, and that without a wish. If I have an idea that that what I am is still good for certain things evolutionarily, then I am afraid that I am still very much bound. If I actually could say, in all truthfulness that what I am is nothing, you see, I am then placing myself on a different kind of standpoint because then I look at myself from the standpoint of a little higher and that what I see then is as if nothing.

It has to be changed. It has to be, I said it once, boiled up. It has to be submitted to a certain porcess; a process of myself, first to see that, to see it as a process of change, to see it as a necessity of change, to see that that what is there, what I have available in any one of my three centers is only good

for a certain purpose of living in life on this Earth. And for the purpose of living on a different plane I have no equipment and not even my ordinary functioning in the best sense, is sufficient. Also that I have to realize and I do not want to accept it. And of course, the possibility if how close we can get in ordinary life to the next level, if the next level has its foundation ina different section, the possibility is as close as sometimes one tree can get to another, provided the branches are wide enough and one leaf touches another one. One tree may be of a different quality and of a different kind of level from the other. At the same time, the nearness of the other tree and that other leaf may have an effect on the leaf of the first one. In that sense, a human being can, at times, unconsciously approach the state of consciousness. Sometimes we call it accidental and sometimes we call it as a result of the constant application inwhich ever direction one tries with all the intention one can find, praying for the possibility of that kind of unificationm that kind of wishing to be one, even if one does not know anything about Gurdjieff.

Therefore, I say it is not hopeless at all, because certain things in our ordinary life are not mechanical. Certain things can be very very useful rpovided I have a measurement, a norm, a standard. And the first thing to do is to establish the standard, the guide, that what I understand by hrmonious man; what I understand at the present time by being free or impartial, or, if you want to introduce the word, simultaneity or Tesoooano or seeing myself or to be in a state of Mars, looking at Earth, or to understand why we perhaps as we are, are here and still have an idea that His Endlessnnss exists. All of this omces up at the end of a year.

We see ourselves well enough. We are not such fools. We know. We really know. We could convince someone even without words. We could, at times, convince someone by our behavior. And, when everything is said and done and I want to have to prove to anyone under certain conditions that I am alive, it could be shown. So, do not let's just sit down and not acknowledge the possibility of working./ We are responsible. We want to work. We can, at times; we have, at times. I am not, as you know, accusing anyone. I am only, I hope, as you remember, that this year, of course, was not right. Of course, that with the amount of knowledge we have, actual facts, data, experiences, people with whom one could work, lost opportunities; that many times laziness has come up and that I have postponed things. I am not saying that it could have been changed but, looking back on it I say, "We can be very sad about our own behavior." The reason we know because we cannot help that at all. At the same time, the situation is sad. And it is not now the time for making resolutions. It is the time to see, in all its true light, what we have been. There is nothing that can be done about it any more. It is finished. Yesterday was finished into today. The beginning of the year is finished into todat at the end of the year. What we are at the present time is a result of our birth and every year in between and there is nothing that can be undone. It is there. The crystallization point constantly is at the moment when we look at ourselves.

Maybe we can understand a little bit more of it. Maybe we can, at times, become a little more serious, honest, open. Perhaps open is the best word; really open. When we are by ourselves, when we do not have to find an excuse; when it does nt matter what we are - black or brown or blue or yellow; whatever we are, we are;

human beings. We work. We can. Again, we must help, help each otehr. Really, we do not do it enough. We do not think of each other enough. We can have good moments. We do not always find the time. Maybe there are many things in life that require a lot of energy and the relationships that we do have, the requirements that are set up by such relationships naturally take away the time and we cannot always devote as much time as wish to work. But, learn once and for all that work is in work. It is not separate from, it is in life. It is on Earth. It is how-how I am when I am. I do not have to set time and time away as if, as if I go to church. I have to be in life. It is the source of my energy. From that I get the energy that is available to me in such quantities that I can actually call on it.

You see, the energy comes from different sources. It comes thru me simply because I happen to be alive and it is the instrument of my body with which I have to function. It can come from outside sources. Naturally it can when I am in the right state; I can receive much energy from outside, not energy that belongs to me but that I could receive if I am open to it. Something, you might say, from a different kind of level; something as if from God; something as if from anyone who has lived before; something as if there us an accumulation of that kind of energy which has not been used on Earth. Nevertheless that was made by many people on Earth of certain faiths: Christian or Hebrew or Islam or Buddha and that as if it exists in the atmosphere above Earth somewhere, somewhere between the Earth and the planetary level, as if, you might say, they are like clouds, condensations of that form of energy which, at times, could become available if I am in the right state of wishing for it. And, opening myself up in a certain way towards that, I can

receive energy. Then, perhaps, there is a voice in my conscience. And sometimes I call it as if God tells me what to do or as if the Holy Ghost descends on one; as if there is then more meaning in my life and with that I say, "I have received as if I were in contact with something of a different and higher nature than I am. There is a third source of energy available. It is available from many people around one; all the people who are unconscious, all the poepl who walk and sepnd a tremendous amount of energy of their own and it runs down into the gutter and it is lost to themf forever. And anyone who is awake, who really can see the necessity mf to sustain his state and wants to try to practise as much as possible to find out how can I get more enerfy for my wish to work, and can I remaan awake and intensify it. For such people in that kind of a state af really desiring it, such energies are available.

Gurdjieff means it when he says that he can use the crumbs of the table of someone else. It is that kind of form of energy that is spent, that is spent by whoever does not care to keep it. And it is not that we take away anything from anyone because it is already lost. It is as if that kind of energy is surrounding in a little atmosphere and it disappears from them, as I say, forever. And anyone who is awake can pick it up and use it. Almost it is there for the asking. It is there as if it is air. And no one, unless they are closed up in one room, no one will ever say that there is not enough oxygen unless again you are living in a city where you have too much monoxide. In general, there is enough. In general, on Lake Superior, there is enough water for anyone who thirsts. It is not a question that there is not enough energy. It is a question: Where will I be able to take it from? And how will I be? How can I digest it and take

it into me so that then when Ido have it, it can be used for the purpose for which I want to use it? You see, the first part, that is, the energy that I have, the energy that I have by means of digestion of food or of air, even that kind of energy I do not use. I lose myself exactly the same as any other unconscious person. I lose a tremendous amount of energy. Also it is lost forver. It is made again; it is produced. The body is a marvelous production manufacturing plant. And it keeps on pouring energy into my blood. And then I use it for unnecessary motions, feelings and thoughts. And then it is lost again for me. What will I do the coming year? What will I understand about this year, about such loss? About such sources of energy which I could have tapped if I had knowh? And the resolutions that we can make now of trying to help remind each other, you might say, when I am unconscious and lose energy, you can pick it up, you might say. One is quite welcome. Maybe in that way we can help each other. At the same time, I can use the energy from someone else. Also, someone else can use my energy if I wish to give it. If there a possibility of actually producing energy in such quantities that perhaps it is impossible for me to use it all, that is, I cannot use it up, very much like in ordinary life I have energy that I cannot use and sometimes it boils over. We know that. We know well enough how thru certain periods there is such a tremendous amount of energy that one does not what to do with it. Also that, at times, is lost.If I only, at such moments, could sent it or control or hold ir ot have it in an accumulator and then actually dispose of it whenever it is right and whenever I wish to, also for that, this kind of work can be very helpful.

If one knows how; how to live, and how to give and how to give correctly. And in that state to be in order to give correctly

or in what state to be when someone else could be aroused to wish to ask.

All of that belongs to a determination of using a year as this year has been; as we have lived it, as we now remember; as now our memeory, particularly regarding the attempts of work, become very clear to us, and they, as work moments, stand outin connection with ordinary life. But there have been moments in this year that I am quite certain that we will not forget and that we did make a special attempt, an effort really to wake up. Such moments now, by means of ones memory, I being back, you might say, today. For the last three, four, fige days of this year, I will make it a point for myself to try to bring back such moments in all its reality as much as I can remember of them. It will not be the reality that I had beofre but when I am awake, you might say, the awareness of such moments will then help me because it will join with the awareness which I can, at the present, make. This question of memory - it is not only a mental ~~xxx~~ question. It is a question of memory of my being. It is a question of understanding that what I understand once, I understand forever. What what is now within me as Being - always will be Being and always will recognize Being because it is not subject to time. If one can only understand this, that time can be eliminated and when it is eliminated then all consciousness becomes one. In this way, this working together means when I am awake, I work with someone who is awake. And there is a recognition of that kind of an awareness of someone to me as much as there is from me to someone else.

And because of that, this year could become a helping, a link between our past lives and what we are going to do in the coming year; as if during this year, seeing the variety of different light points that we remember inwhich we made actually an effort, that

at that time when we remember that, that then it flows over into the possibility of next year so that we can count on that. After all, this is the only foundation we have, really the only foundation that will last. That is the only kind of rick that actually can be used for building. The rest - who knows when one dies? The rest dies without any question. The rest is subject to rain and snow. The rest is sand, useful for a little while but it will not be permananet enough.

We are trying to find something that is permananet, so that whoever will meet us and whoever we will meet, we can meet on the basis of 'I am what I am - you can count on me. I will be always for you wherever you wish me to be if you need me. If I am your friend, I will always be you r friend regardless of what you understand of my life and regardless of what I understand of your life.' If once I say, "I am your friend", I mean it with all my heart and everything that belongs to me.

Such statements we make at the end of the year. On that kind of a basis do we wish to continue. If we do not make such statements, there is no use living. We can continue to exist a little longer. And we can eat and drink and do whatever you wish. You can even drink to the health of the New Year but even if you do, and you forget yourself, who is in it? Everybody else, but not me and you.

We want to have a life inwhich all of us could be individually and collectively, totally fused and still component parts. This kind of solidarity, this kind of wish to want to work together, if we can understand the aim of our existence, if we can understand the purpose in our lives and that there is a purpose why we are here. And it has not just happened that we are here now. But,

since we are here, trying to understand why we are here, we may as well put it on the basis that there is something, let's call it, foreordained altho I never know who may have ordained it. It is not just luck. It is a meaning in itself, a meaning now, other wise we would not have come.

How to translate it now into work; how to use it, how to form a basis onwhich we can stand, onwhich we can actually continue with a new year and what we bow understand of ourselves and what there is in ourselves that is permanent in that sense, on which we can count. So that when you go home tonight and you try to think about what is you, what is your solidarity, on what can you count, you yourself, what is it that you say, "Today it is this. Tomorrow it is this. The day after it is this; always the same". How much is there in you that is always the same even if it does not show? But, if it had to be shown, it would be the same.

This oneness, this wish to be, this reality, this essential quality of every one of us, this will make the dependability of a relationship of trying to work together in understanding life, understanding our own life, our little life, small as it may be and whatever place it may occupy. It really does not matter as long as it is life ~~knockin~~ for which I will say, with all my might, "Yes, I accept it because it is mine." Abd, at the same time, I am willing to give it because it is mine. At the same time, it is also mine to give.

Now we work. It is for me as if it prayer, as of we could all understand it. It is a prayer without sentimentality. It is a prayer based on a real wish of trying to see life, maybe as we have seen it a few times during the year. As if then, when

tonight you remember and not necessarily that you drink. I do not mean that but that as if you, in a drink, you drink your whole year up. You then connect with all the things that have happened and you realize that you are the product of your own living. And that then, with that, you make a resolution: I and It, a separation as if there are two, under the guidance of that what grows, which is three; fusing the three into one, again becoming the servant of the fourth. This is the meaning of life: How to change from three to four. How to change from the Law of Triamonia to the All Quarters Maintainers. Three times four equals twelve. It is the zodiac sign.

Maybe in all simplicity, sincerity, wish, reality, as much as you know, with that wish, we live the next two or three days until the end of the year. The end of the year which is the beginning could be if we want to make it a beginning if we want to understand Christmas, the realization of Christmas week, a period of jestation, perhaps not as yet a full birth.

Maybe there are limitations in ourselves. Maybe the conception is not entirely complete. At the same time, there is life which can stir and perhaps will make it a little bit more difficult for us to continue to sleep like we always have done. We take all our sleep of all the years, all our unconscious states, all our absurdities and nonsense, all of that we will put together and say as if nothin. And I will accept for whatever it is as value, remaining as value here, not needing it than only when there is a real wish for growth and evolution and then I need everything.

I hope we work next year. But I hope we work on the basis of this year, the understanding of this year, that what has made us, with which we have come this far. It is not very far but

maybe we can say we are on the road. And, one thing: We are alive and we try to wake up day after day. I hope we all can remember.

So maybe next week we meet again. It will be the first meeting of the new year. We will talk about work next year; what to do, how to hold each other to it. What could be possible if actually we could wish in such a way, with kindness, with trying to see in each other a real desire to grow or to wake up and to unite that way, to appreciate. Not on the basis of ordinary friendship but on the basis of a little bit of a section of humanity, having in mind the possibility of getting away from Earth as soon as possible.

If you don't mind, no questions tonight. And all who wish to come next week, you come. Same time, same place. Don, yes? Good night everybody. Good night.